



Dates for the Diary:

NDP Drop-In Sessions

Saturday 9th July:

10am—12pm

Walford Village Hall

Thursday 14th July

7pm—9pm

Bishopswood Village Hall

Walford Parish Council

Wednesday 20th July

7.30pm — 9.30pm

Bishopswood Village Hall

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Working towards a safer Walford: SmartWater

As previously announced, the Parish Council has secured grant funding from the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner, John Campion, under the 'We Don't Buy Crime' initiative. This scheme provides funding towards the cost of a 'SmartWater' kit for every household within the Walford Parish.

What is SmartWater?

SmartWater is a sophisticated security system that protects property, deters thieves and helps the police to convict criminals. It can be directly applied to valuables or it can be used to spray criminals committing a crime. SmartWater contains a unique forensic code that is registered to an address or location. Anything marked can be traced back to where it came from, allowing the police to identify stolen property and link criminals to crime scenes. SmartWater is almost invisible in natural light but glows brightly under ultraviolet (UV) light.

Your SmartWater Kit

We are delighted to now enclose your own personalised household SmartWater kit. This kit has been pre-registered with West Mercia police to your address and is ready for immediate use.

If you decide you do not want your SmartWater kit then please do not open the packaging and contact the Clerk (clerk@walford-pc.org.uk) to arrange for collection.

Where can I use my SmartWater kit?

Your SmartWater kit can be used to protect any item of value you own from electrical goods to jewellery, IT equipment to furniture to vehicles and even gardening and farming equipment. Full instructions for use are enclosed.

Why do Criminals avoid SmartWater?

If a criminal is marked with SmartWater or caught with SmartWater-marked property, they face an increased risk of prosecution. SmartWater has helped to convict thousands of criminals and has a 100% conviction rate. Police Forces nationwide, along with many second-hand dealers, scrap merchants and recyclers are all looking for SmartWater.



NDP: Update

Progress to Date

The NDP has come a long way since the council elections in 2019. At its heart is probably one of the most extensive public consultations of any parish in Herefordshire; parishioners, Site Owners and Public Service providers have had many opportunities for input to the process. The latest stage of progress was Regulation 14, the first Regulatory public consultation which ran from 4th January – 16th February 2022, during which Walford Parish Council (WPC) submitted its first draft NDP for parishioners and other statutory consultees to review and comment.

Regulation 14 results

WPC received ten responses from parishioners and eight from statutory consultees. The comments were detailed in four documents: Schedule of Representations, Schedule of Alterations, Submission draft NDP reflecting the list of alterations and, Changes needed to the Environment Report and Appropriate Assessment (all available on the WPC website). WPC considered these documents at an Extraordinary Parish Council meeting on 7th April 2022. Some difficult decisions were made to ensure compliance with the rigorous process defined by Herefordshire Council (HC) and with the outcome of the previous public consultation exercise, which overwhelmingly favoured small sites for housing development. These decisions included the defined Settlement Boundaries and potential development sites for housing allocation.

What is a Settlement Boundary?

A Settlement Boundary is a line drawn on a plan that tightly wraps around the physical built edge of a housing cluster, a village, town or city. In an NDP this means that any future housing development will normally be contained within the Settlement Boundary. Planning applications falling outside a Settlement Boundary are treated as an exception and subject to much stricter planning controls. WPC has defined the Walford Parish Settlement Boundaries as Bishopswood, Walford and Coughton (x3), and Howle Hill (x3) – these are detailed in the Draft NDP.

Potential Development Sites

The previous public consultation exercise clearly determined that Parishioners favoured the allocation of small sites for housing development. Five small potential housing development sites have now been identified:

- ◆ North side of Leys Hill Lane, Bishopswood: 0.45 hectare
- ◆ Arthur's Dingle adjacent to the B4234, Bishopswood: 0.65 hectare
- ◆ Lower Field, Orchard Heights, Leys Hill, Bishopswood: 0.8 hectare
- ◆ Off Watling Street, Hom Green/Ross-on-Wye: 0.45 hectare
- ◆ Cedar Grove, Coughton: 0.45 hectare

It is important to note that planning permission has **not** been granted on any of these sites and will need to be applied for separately following the normal planning processes. Despite the identification of these new development sites as well as the current planning permissions already in place within the Parish, including the recently granted planning permissions for 12 houses on Howle Hill, Walford is still reliant on 'windfall' housing to meet its housing allocation. WPC has implemented a Memorandum of Understanding with Ross Town Council to utilise some of their housing excess on a 'best efforts' basis in the event of any housing shortfall within Walford.

Why do we need an NDP?

An NDP is the only way to assert the will of local residents with regards to future development and planning activity. Walford residents clearly favour small sites – if no NDP is in place then Herefordshire Council will allocate housing numbers as dictated by central government without any local consultation and without any regard for local opinion.

What happens next?

The updated “Submission” NDP has been sent to HC for checking, following which the NDP will be formally submitted for HC inspection under the second Regulatory consultation stage known as Regulation 15/16. If the NDP meets the requirements, it will be published by HC for a six-week period for comment/representations and the HC Neighbourhood Planning team will inform the consultation bodies that the plan has been submitted (Regulation 16). *(The NDP can be declined if it does not meet the required regulations, this is not a judgement about its content but about the process that has been undertaken.)*

Following the conclusion of the six-week consultation period, HC will make a recommendation regarding the progress of the NDP to the examination stage with final approval from the Director of Economy, Communities and Corporate or the Assistant Director.

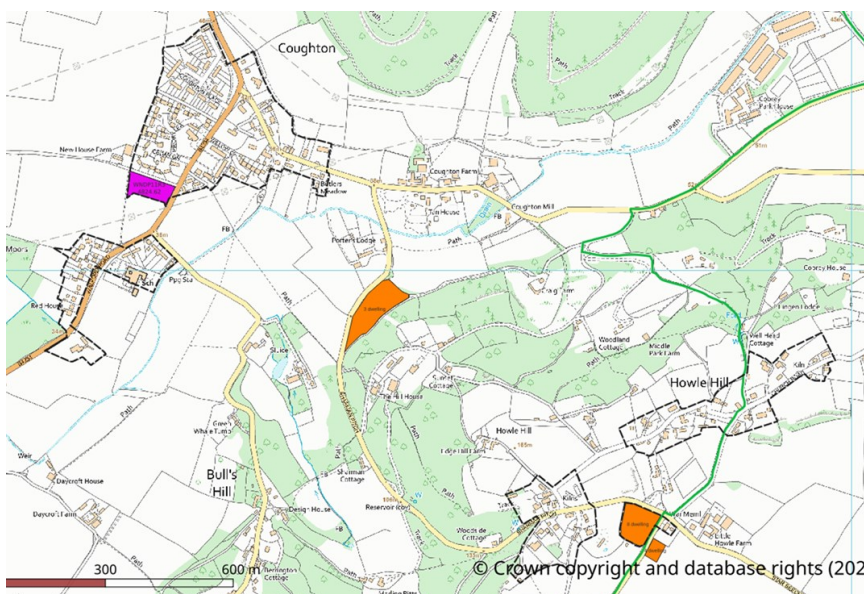
Other documents to be submitted to HC with the NDP are:

- ◆ A map showing the parish boundary
- ◆ A Consultation Statement (about who, what and how consultations were conducted)
- ◆ A Basic Conditions Statement (about how the NDP complies with all the national and local conditions mandated)
- ◆ The updated (if necessary) Environmental Report and Appropriate Assessment

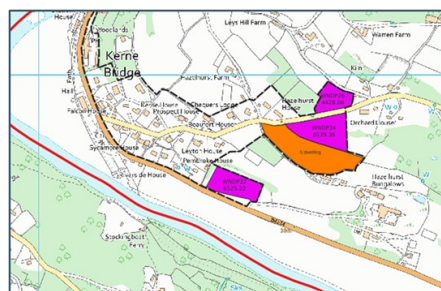
Open sessions

WPC are holding two Public Information drop-in sessions to answer any questions from Parishioners, Saturday 9th July 10am—12pm at Walford Village Hall, and, Thursday 14th July 7pm—9pm at Bishopswood Village Hall. Details will be published on the WPC and WPC NDP websites.

Potential Development Sites within the defined Settlement Boundaries



- Allocated in NDP
- Extant permission for 3 or more dwellings
- Settlement Boundary



Dark Skies

The Kerne Bridge Dark Skies Project has started in Walford Parish! Residents including children have been observing and recording our dark skies with an aim to reduce light pollution. The Wye Valley Society received a grant from Herefordshire Council but Cllr. Yolande Watson (Herefordshire Councillor for Kerne Bridge) is leading the project. Very few people realise:

- Increased Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) is directly linked to a negative impact on the health of people and wildlife including bats, birds, insects, reptiles, amphibians, mammals, and plants.
- Lighting accounts for nearly 6% of the global CO2 emissions and 20% of the electricity used worldwide. Inefficient lighting wastes over £1bn a year in the UK alone.

Walford Parish Council has a dark skies remit in its Environmental Policy so you can do your bit by:

Switch off unnecessary lighting: Make sure to turn off unnecessary lights or use a sensor to help limit your use. This will not only help reduce light pollution but also lower your energy consumption and save money!

Only add light where and when you really need to: Us-

ing external lights to move around your garden and in and out of the house safely makes sense. Leaving them on all night does not.

Use only the brightest light you need: You don't need "daylight bright" light at night. Choose "warmer" lights, this reduces the amount of blue-violet light being emitted, which is considered more harmful to insects and reflects light upwards adding to the problem of 'skyglow'.

Shield your lights: Adding shields to existing lights can help stop casting light into unwanted places such as trees, hedges and even up into the night sky. Interior lighting also casts out into the outside world if curtains and blinds aren't shut. Make sure you shut your curtains when you put the lights on inside.

Share the message of reducing light pollution: Reducing your light pollution is a great step, but we need everyone to do their bit to help. Sharing the messages about the impacts of light pollution with friends, family and neighbours will help generate the collective effort we need.

If you want more information or want to get involved in the Dark Skies project, contact Cllr. Watson on yolande.watson@herefordshire.gov.uk

Drainage Survey

The Safety & Environmental Working Group has recently undertaken a project to map all the drains within the Parish. This information will be incorporated into the Balfour Beatty management system to ensure regular clearance and maintenance of all Parish drains to mitigate flood risk.

Walford Community Support Scheme

We are sorry to announce that our wonderful Co-Ordinator, Be Macintosh is leaving the Scheme at the end of June. The vacancy will be advertised on the Council website and Facebook page—if you would like to apply please email your CV to the Clerk.

Kerne Bridge Canoe Launch

Get your FREE residents' parking permit for the Canoe Launch

Any resident of Walford Parish is entitled to park for free at the Launch. To get your permit please email the Clerk or ask Charlie in person at the Launch itself.

Himalayan Balsam

A volunteer clearance programme is being planned to clear this invasive weed from the riverbanks within the Parish — please email the Clerk if you would like to be involved.